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JOHN W. CLINTON.
1836-1918.

John Waterbury Clinton was born at Andes, Delaware County, New York, November 21, 1836, and died at Polo, Illinois, February 11, 1918.

He was the oldest son of George Clinton and Jane Ann Gibbs.

He was given the name of a dear and intimate friend of his father. It is significant that the last use of his pen, only a few weeks before his death, was in writing the obituary of a friend of his boyhood, Calvin Waterbury, a nephew of John Waterbury.

Mr. Clinton's mother died when he was 11 years of age, and some time after his father married Mrs. Mary Dowie. Of this marriage was born a daughter, Georgiana, who is the sole survivor of the family.

Young Clinton was educated at Roxbury Academy and in 1857 came to Polo, Illinois, which at that time was just emerging from its primeval prairie state. In fact, Buffalo Grove (Old Town) was the leading village at that time and the new teacher there followed in the steps of no mean predecessor, for John Burroughs had taught there the previous year. Later Mr. Clinton taught in the brick schoolhouse, also at Forreston, Old Town, and last of all in the basement of the Independent Presbyterian Church, there being no schoolhouse as yet in Polo.

In 1865 he began his work as editor of the *Press*, and continued it thirty-six years. He built up a strong, clean, wholesome newspaper that was a power for righteousness. No bitter criticism could make him swerve from what he thought was right. If a battle was on, his trumpet gave forth no uncertain sound. His work for temperance, for education, for the slave, for the church, for everything that tends towards the higher life abides with us to-day, and the

community in which he lived is a better community because he lived there.

January 24, 1861, he was married at Buffalo Grove to Caroline Perkins, the youngest daughter of Deacon Timothy and Sarah Perkins, and this union was unbroken for more than fifty-seven years. Of this marriage were born seven children.

In 1858 he united with the Independent Presbyterian Church of Polo, of which he continued a loyal and devoted member to the end of his life. If there was but one man present at the prayer meetings there was no need to ask his name. He was always in Sunday school; superintendent for some years and other years as student or teacher.

While keeping abreast with the times, reading the best current literature, he was a diligent student of the Bible, and said that what little gifts he possessed in the way of literary ability he owed more to that study than to any other source.

He was a generous giver, liberal to the extent of his means and sometimes beyond them.

He was postmaster eight years, a member of the Board of Education for some years. Also he was president of the Illinois Press Association, a member of the library board and in his declining years he did much valuable work in historical research, besides cultivating the rare flowers which were his delight. But his interest in civic affairs never abated—it was not state-wide or nation-wide, but world-wide, so that the present conflict of nations stirred him to the depths of his being.

He “rests from his labors,” but his works remain a benediction.

Funeral services were held Thursday afternoon at two o'clock at the Independent Presbyterian Church, Rev. Luke Stuart officiating.

The *Tri-County Press*, of which Mr. Clinton was once editor, on February 21, 1918, contained the following tribute to his memory.

“During the years that we have known the late J. W. Clinton, we have been struck by the saneness of his perspective. He saw things as they are. He was able to give everything its true value.

"We have listened to many tributes to this man and to the splendid work he did for his community during his thirty-six years as editor of this paper. The general verdict seems to be that he did more than he ever got credit for, more than the community realizes. His courageous stand on many a question cost him temporary popularity and money. But he was one of those old-fashioned country editors who had the fear of God but not of man in his heart, hence his power for good.

"He saw things clearly. He saw that truckling and pandering to the majority is too high a price to pay for transient popularity; that majorities are not always right; that one man armed with the eternal principles of right constitutes a majority. He knew that his work was not appreciated to the extent that it should have been, but it did not embitter him. He looked back upon it with a smile. It was all in the day's work.

"A few months ago he dropped into the office to express his approval of an article that appeared in our issue of that week. We thanked him and said that we were pleased that he agreed with us for we had heard that there were many who were not at all pleased with it. His eye twinkled, and he smiled dryly and said 'Hemingway, I am a great deal more popular now than I ever was as editor of the *Press*.'"

Mr. Clinton was a director of the Illinois State Historical Society and worked earnestly for its success. He contributed much valuable historical material to its publications and archives.